

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of producing a malt alcohol beverage, comprising:

removing through adsorption at least a part of rough flavor components from malt, a malt alcohol beverage intermediate product, or the malt alcohol beverage with the aid of an adsorbent selected from the group consisting of a strongly basic anion-exchange resin, and a weakly basic anion-exchange resin ~~and a synthetic adsorbent;~~

wherein the rough flavor component is a causative substance for stale flavor or a precursor thereof.

Claims 2-4 (Canceled)

5. (Previously Amended) The method of producing a malt alcohol beverage according to claim 1, wherein the rough flavor component is a carbonyl compound or a Maillard compound.

6. (Previously Amended) The method of producing a malt alcohol beverage according to claim 1, wherein the rough flavor component is an organic acid.

7. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

mixing a raw material containing malt with water, thereby obtaining a mixture;

saccharifying the malt by warming the mixture, thereby obtaining saccharified malt; collecting wort from the saccharified malt;

fermenting the wort by addition of yeast thereto, thereby obtaining the malt alcohol beverage intermediate product;

storing the malt alcohol beverage intermediate product; and

filtering the malt alcohol beverage intermediate product to produce the malt alcohol beverage.

8. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 7, wherein said rough flavor components are removed before the filtration of the malt alcohol beverage intermediate product.

9. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein said adsorbent reduces a stale flavor of said malt alcohol beverage.

10. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the adsorbent is a styrene or acrylic basic anion exchange resin ~~selected from the group consisting of SA10A, SA11A, SA12A, NSA100, SA20A, SA21A, PA308, PA312, PA312, PA316, PA408, PA412, PA418, HPA25, HPA75, WA10, WA20, WA21J, WA30, IRA400C1, IRA402BLC1, IRA410C1, IRA96SB, IRA67, and IRAXE583.~~

Claims 11-12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the rough flavor component is propanal, hexanal, hexenal, pentanal, furfural, trans-2-nonenal, phenylacetaldehyde or a mixture thereof.

14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the rough flavor component is 5-hydroxymethylfurfural, an Amadori substance, a precursor of an Amadori substance or a mixture thereof.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the rough flavor component is selected from the group consisting of glucose-glycine, glucose-alanine, glucose-leucine, glucose-isoleucine, fructose-proline, fructose-glutamic acid, fructose-serine, fructose-threonine and mixtures thereof.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the rough flavor component is a heterocyclic compound having a pyrazine ring, pyrrole ring, or imidazole ring.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the rough flavor component is a product of the decomposition of an unsaturated fatty acid.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein an unsaturated fatty acid is removed.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein said unsaturated fatty acid is selected from the group consisting of pyroglutamic acid,

acetic acid, lactic acid, succinic acid, malic acid, pyruvic acid, citric acid, fumaric acid, isocitric acid and mixtures thereof.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein a decrease in a degree of bitterness of the malt alcohol beverage after the adsorption is 0-50%.

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claims 4 and 11-12 have been cancelled.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 4.

Claim 10 has been amended as supported at page 15, lines 3-8.

No new matter is believed to have been added by entry of this amendment.

Entry and favorable reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Upon entry of this amendment Claims 1, 5-10 and 13-20 will now be active in this application.

INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Sherrer for the helpful and courteous discussion with Applicants' Representative on October 21, 2004. During this discussion it was noted that the claims as currently amended appear to overcome the outstanding rejections. With regard to "degree of bitterness" Applicants' Representative discussed page 19, lines 15-25 of the specification, which appeared acceptable to the Examiner.